

When the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994 was enacted, we took a historic step forward in addressing sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking and other forms of violence against women. This legislation established new criminal and civil enforcement tools for holding perpetrators accountable and provided victims with the ability to seek justice and access to a network of support options.

On September 13th, we marked the 15th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act. As we commemorate this historic milestone, it is important to note that women are now more likely to report incidents of rape, sexual assault and abuse, and domestic violence has declined overall in many parts of the country.

However, the battle is far from over. Approximately 600 women are raped or assaulted in the United States each day, and countless incidents go unreported. Fifteen years after Congress passed this landmark bill, low-income women and women of color continue to be disproportionately affected by domestic violence, and domestic violence remains grossly underreported in the LGBT community.

What's more, the economic downturn and high unemployment have contributed to recent increases in domestic violence and child abuse. And, some states have been forced to cut funding for important domestic violence programs and services because of budget constraints. Simply put, we still have much work to do.

Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have fought to protect any victim of violence regardless of race, creed, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, status, or gender. I am a proud cosponsor of the Military Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Act, which would help individuals access resources to address domestic and family violence, sexual assault, and stalking in the military.

Violence against women negatively impacts a woman's physical, mental and reproductive health, and threatens the overall health and development of families and communities. Advocates, organizations, and state, federal and tribal governments must work together to develop and maintain comprehensive and culturally competent strategies that prevent and stop violence against women in the home, military, workplace, campus and correctional institutions.

Rest assured, I will continue to support efforts that guarantee the health and safety of women and children all across this nation.

If you are the victim of domestic violence or know someone who is please call **The National Domestic violence Hotline:**

1.800.799. SAFE (7233) 1.800.787.3224 (TTY)

Anonymous & Confidential Help 24/7

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